

Icelandic

This list contains Icelandic words with their English translations. The words included here are those that you are likely to find in genealogical sources. If the word you are looking for (or some form of it) is not on this list, please consult an Icelandic-English dictionary. (See the "Additional Resources" section below.)

Icelandic is a Germanic language like Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish. It is the purest form of the "Old Norse" language that exists today. It was brought to the country by the Norsemen, who settled Iceland. Icelandic has been a written language for more than 900 years and has remained relatively unchanged.

Iceland was under Danish rule until 1918. Records written before the mid 1800s may include Danish and some Latin words. Note that in the 1801 census, Danish and to some extent Latin, rather than Icelandic, are used throughout the text. See the *Danish Genealogical Word List* (31029) and the *Latin Genealogical Word List* (34077).

LANGUAGE CHARACTERISTICS

Variant Forms of Words

In Icelandic, as in English, the forms of some words vary according to how they are used in a sentence. *Who—whose—whom* and *marry—marries—married* are examples of words in English with variant forms. The endings of a word in a document may differ from those in this list. For example:

<i>gift</i>	marry	<i>gifting</i>	marriage
<i>gifta</i>	to marry	<i>giftur</i>	married

Alphabetical Order

Written Icelandic uses the following letters not found in the English alphabet: *á, ð, é, í, ó, ú, ý, þ, æ, ö*. The letters *þ, æ, and ö* are alphabetized after *z*. This word list, like most Icelandic dictionaries and indexes, uses the following alphabetical order:

a á b c d ð e é f g h i í j k l m n o ó p q r s t u ú v w x y
ý z þ æ ö

If you do not find a word in the alphabetical order listed above, search forward and backward in the dictionary, index, or word list until you locate the word.

Spelling

Spelling rules were not standardized in earlier centuries. Words were written as they sounded. Because Iceland was under Danish rule so long, and because many officials were Danish or had been educated in Denmark, Danish influence was prominent in vocabulary and style until the late eighteenth century.

In the 1703, 1801, and 1816 censuses and in the oldest church registers, the following phonetic or spelling variations are common:

<i>b</i> used for <i>p</i>	<i>i</i> used for <i>j</i>
<i>c</i> used for <i>k</i>	<i>k</i> used for <i>q</i>
<i>d</i> used for <i>t</i>	<i>v</i> and <i>w</i> used interchangeably
<i>f</i> used for <i>v</i>	

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This word list includes only words most commonly found in genealogical sources. For more help, use an Icelandic-English dictionary. Several are available at the Family History Library in the International collection. The call numbers begin with 439.6321.

Some helpful dictionaries include:

Cleasby, Richard, et al. *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957. (FHL book Scand 439.6321 C558li; not available on film or fiche.)

Bogason, Sigurður Örn. *Ensk-Íslensk Orðabók* (English-Icelandic Dictionary). Reykjavik:

Ísafoldarprentsmiðja H.F., 1976. (FHL book Scand 439.6321 B633e; film 0407215.)

The following English-Icelandic dictionary is available through most bookstores that carry Icelandic books:

Sören Sörenson: *Ensk-íslensk orðabók með alfræðilegu ívafi*. Reykjavík: Örn og Örlygur, 1984.

Additional dictionaries are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under ICELAND—LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGES—DICTIONARIES.

KEY WORDS

In order to find specific types of information in Icelandic records, you will need to know some key words in Icelandic. This section lists key genealogical terms in English and the Icelandic words that convey the concept.

For example, in the first column you find the word *marriage*. In the second column you find Icelandic words with meanings such as *married*, *married couple*, *bridal pair*, and other words used in Icelandic records to indicate marriage.

English	Icelandic
birth	fæddur, fædd, fæddir, fæðingar
bride	brúður
bridegroom	brúðgumi
burials	greftrun, begrafning, jarðarför, útför
census	fólkstal, fólksfjöldatal, manntal, sálnaregistur
child	barn
children	börn
christenings	skírður, skírn (nefndur [given a name], kallaður [given a name at christening])
civil district	hreppur
confirmands	fermdir, fermingarbörn
confirmation	ferming
day	dagur
deaths	dáin, dánir, dauðir
engagement	trúlofun
father	faðir
illegitimate	launbarn, óskilgetinn, óegta

English	Icelandic
marriage	hjónaband, gifting, giftur, hjón, brúðhjón
minister	prestur, séra, síra
mother	móðir
move in	innkomnir
move out	burtfluttir, burtviknir, brottflutt
named	nefndur (given a name), kallaður (given a name at christening)
parents	foreldrar
parish	sókn
stillborn	andvana fædd
wife	kona, eiginkona
witnesses	vitni, skírnavottur
year	ár

GENERAL WORD LIST

This general word list includes words commonly seen in genealogical sources, including words for occupations, illnesses, and causes of death. Numbers, months, and days of the week are listed both here and in separate sections that follow this list. Words in parentheses in the English column clarify the definition.

Icelandic	English
A	
aðkominn, aðkomnir	arrivals, guests
af	by
afi	grandfather
aflausn	public remission of sins
akur	field
aldur	age
amma	grandmother
andaður, andaðir (plural)	deceased (male), dead
andarteppa	croup
andast	die
andlega vanheill	mentally deficient, weak-minded
andvana fæddur	stillborn child
annar	second
aphotækar	pharmacist
apótekari	pharmacy
apríl	April
asmi	asthma
auglýsing	proclamation
austur	east

Icelandic	English
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A

á	on, at
á morgun	tomorrow
áar	ancestors
ágúst	August
ái	ancestor
ár	year
átján	eighteen
átjándi	eighteenth
átta	eight
áttatíu	eighty
áttugasti	eightieth
áttundi	eight

B

bakari	baker
barkahósti	croup
barn	child
barna	make pregnant
barnlaus	childless
barnsæng	childbed
bátsmaður	boatman
bátur	boat
beður	bed
begrafn	buried
beiningamaður	beggar
berklaveiki	tuberculosis
beykir	cooper
blaðsíða	page
blikksmiður	tinsmith
blindur	blind
blóðsótt	dysentery
borg	city
borgari	citizen
bókari	accountant
bókbindari	book binder
bókhaldari	bookkeeper
bóksali	bookseller
bóla	smallpox
bólga	inflammation
bólusetja	vaccinate
bóndi	farmer
brenna	burn
brenndur	burned, burning
bréf	letter, deed
brjóstsjúkdómur	chest disease
brjóstþyngsli	shortness of breath
bróðir	brother
bróðursonur	nephew (brother's son)

Icelandic	English
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brúðgumi	bridegroom
brúðhjón	bridal pair
brúður	bride
bræður	brothers
burtfluttir	move out
búa	live, reside
búandi	resident
búsetumaður	cottager, resident
búskapur	farming
bústaður	place of residence
bústýra	housekeeper
bæjarnafn	name of farm
bær	farm, town
börn	children

C

confirmeraður	confirmed, confirmand
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D

daglaunamaður	day laborer
dagsetja	date
dagur	day
dalur	valley
dauði	death
dauður	dead, died
dáinn	dead, died
dánir	dead, died
dáti	soldier
desember, 10ber	December
deyja	die
diarrhe	diarrhea
dó	died
dóttir	daughter
dótturdóttir	grandchild (daughter's daughter)
dóttursonur	grandson (daughter's son)
dráp	murder, killing
drengur	boy
druknaði	drowned

E

eftirlifendur	survivors, heirs
eftirmiddagur	afternoon
egta barn	legitimate child
eiga, eiginn	own
einn	single, one
eitur	poison

Icelandic	English
ekkill	widower
ekkja	widow
ekkjumaður	widower
eldri	older, elder
eldur	fire
ellefti	eleventh
ellefu	eleven
elli	old age
erfðaskrá	probate record, testament
erfingi	heir, survivor

F

fader (Danish)	father
faðir	father
fangelsi	prison
far	father
fara	go away, move
fátækur	poor
febrúar	February
ferðast	traveling through
ferma	confirm
fermdur	confirmed
ferming	confirmation
fertugasti	fortieth
fimm	five
fimmtán	fifteen
fimmtándi	fifteenth
fimmti	fifth
fimmtíu	fifty
fimmtudagur	Thursday
fimmtugasti	fiftieth
fiskimaður	fisherman
fjall	mountain
fjórði	fourth
fjórir	four
fjórtán	fourteen
fjórtdandi	fourteenth
fjörutíu	forty
flogaveiki	epilepsy
flogaverkur	spasmic pain
fluttir	moved (from parish)
flytja	move
flytja af landi burt	emigrate
flytja inn	move in
foreldrar	parents
fógeti	sheriff
fólksfjöldatal	census
fólkstal	census
fóstra	foster mother
fóstri	foster father

Icelandic	English
fósturbarn	foster child
fósturforeldrar	foster parents
fótgönguliðsmaður	infantryman
frá	from
Frú	Madame, Mrs.
frændsemispell	incest
fyrstur	first
fæða	give birth to
fæddur	born
föstudagur	Friday

G

gamall	old
garður	garden, yard
garðyrkjumaður	gardener
gata	street
geðveikur	insane
geit	goat
giftast	get married
gifting	marriage
giftur	married
gigt	rheumatism, gout
gjalda	pay
glófagjörðarmaður	glove maker
grafinn	buried
greftrun	burial
griðkona	servant (female)
griðmaður	laborer, servant
guðfaðir	godfather
guðfeðgin	godparents
guðmóðir	godmother
gula	jaundice
gullsmiður	goldsmith
gær	yesterday
gömul	old

H

hafnsögumaður	harbor pilot
handsprengjumaður	grenadier
hattamakari	hatmaker
haust	autumn, fall
hádegi	noon, midday
háls	throat
hálsbólga	sore throat
heilablóðfall	stroke
heima nefndur	named (christened) at home
heimili	house
hengdi	hanged, hung
hengja	hang

Icelandic	English
hermaður	rural (land) soldier
hestur	horse, pony
hjarta	heart
hjartasjúkdómur	heart disease
hjá	by
hjálparmaður	assistant
hjólasmíður	wheelwright
hjón	married couple
hjónaband	marriage
hljóðfæraleikari	musician
hór	adultery
hreppstjóri	local sheriff, overseer in a poor-law district
hreppur	civil district, poor-law district
hundrað	hundred
hundraðasti	hundredth
hús	house
húsamálari	house painter
húsameistari	builder, master builder
húsbóndi	head of family
húsaðir	head of family
húsgagnasmíður	cabinet maker
húsmóðir	housewife, mistress of the house
hvaðan	where from, place of birth
hvítasunna	Pentecost
hæð	hill
höfuðsvimi	dizziness
höfuðverkur	headache

I

iðnaðarmaður	journeyman
iðnnemi	apprentice
innfluttir	move in
innkomnir	moved into parish
innri	inner
innvortis meinsemd	internal disease

Í

í	in
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J

janúar	January
jarða	bury
jarðaður	buried

Icelandic	English
járnsmiður	blacksmith
jól	Christmas
júlí	July
júní	June
jörð	farm, land
jörðuð	buried

K

kallaður	named (christened)
kamskapari	comb maker
karl	male
karlkyns	males
kaupmaður	trader, merchant
kaupmáli	deed
kirkja	church
kirkjubækur	church registers
kirkjusókn	church parish
kíghósti	whooping cough
klæðskeri	tailor
kona	woman, wife
konfirmera	confirm
kotbóndi	cottager
krabbamein	cancer
kraftur	strength (lack of)
kreppa	cramp
kreppusótt	scorbutic disease
kvenmaður	woman, female
kvöld	evening
kýr	cow
kölluð	named (christened)

L

land	farm, land
landbúnaður	agriculture, farming
landfarsótt	epidemic
laugardagur	Saturday
launbarn	illegitimate child
lausn	public remission of sins
leigjandi	leaseholder, lodger
leiguliði	leaseholder
lind	water source (spring)
lífýki	diarrhea
lítill	little, small, young
ljósmóðir	midwife
lungnabólga	pneumonia
lungnasótt	lung disease
lægri	lower
lækur	stream, brook

Icelandic	English
lærður	journeyman (literal meaning: learned)
lögmaður	lawyer

M

maður	man, husband
magaverkur	stomachache
maí	May
malari	millar
mannanöfn	names
manntal	census
mágkona	sister-in-law
mágur	brother-in-law
málari	painter
mánudagur	Monday
mánuður	month
mars	March
marz	March
með	with
meinsemd	disease
mey barn	female child
meyjar	maidens, girls
miðvikudagur	Wednesday
misferli	accident, offense
mislingar	measles
mínúta	minute
morð	murder
morgunn	morning
móðir	mother
móðurafi	grandfather (mother's father)
móðuramma	grandmother (mother's mother)
múrari	mason

N

nafn	name
námumaður	miner
nefna	name, named
nefndur	named (christened)
nemi	apprentice, student
nervefeber (Danish)	nerve fever (possibly typhoid)
niðurgangur	diarrhea
niðursetningur	pauper
nítján	nineteen
nítjándi	nineteenth
nítugasti	ninetieth
níu	nine

Icelandic	English
níundi	ninth
níutíu	ninety
norður	north
nón	midafternoon
nótt	night
nóvember, 9ber	November
nýrnasjúkdómur	kidney disease
nærkona	midwife
nöfn	names

O

og	and
október, 8ber	October
orgelleikari	organist

Ó

óegta barn	illegitimate child
óekta barn	illegitimate child
ógift	unmarried, single (woman)
ógiftur	unmarried, single (man)
ókvæntur	unmarried, single (man)
ómagi	pauper
ónefndur	unchristened
óskilgetinn	illegitimate
óþekktur	unknown

P

páskar	Easter
pige (Danish)	girl
piltar	farmhands
piltur	boy, boys
prentari	printer
prestur	clergyman, pastor, priest

R

refsað	punished
riddaraliðsmaður	cavalryman
riddari	dragoon
ræningi	robber, thief

S

samanvígð hjón	married couple
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Icelandic

English

sauðfé	sheep
saurlífi	fornication, adultery
sautján	seventeen
sautjándi	seventeenth
sálnaregistur	soul register
september, 7ber	September
sex	six
sextán	sixteen
sextándi	sixteenth
sextíu	sixty
sextugasti	sixtieth
séra (Sra)	Reverend
silfursmiður	silversmith, goldsmith
síðdegi	afternoon
síra (Sra)	Reverend
sjálf	own
sjálfseignabóndi	freeholder
sjálfsmorð	suicide
sjómaður	sailor, fisherman
sjúkur	sick
sjö	seven
sjötfú	seventy
sjötti	sixth
sjötugasti	seventieth
sjöundi	seventh
skarlagen feber	scarlet fever
skildu	separated, divorced
skilgetinn	legitimate (child)
skip	ship
skipstjóri	captain of a ship
skíra	baptize, christen
skírdagur	Maundy Thursday
skírður	baptized
skírn	baptism
skírnarvottur	christening witnesses
skírteini	certificate
skóari	shoemaker
skógarvörður	forester
skógur	forest
skólakennari	teacher
skósmiður	shoemaker
skraddari	tailor
skriflegt	in writing
skyrbjúgur	scurvy
skytta	rifle soldier
slag	stroke
slagaveiki	apoplexy
slátrari	butcher
slys	accident
smali	shepherd
smábær	village
smiður	smith

Icelandic

English

snikkari	cabinetmaker
soldat	soldier
sonarsonur	grandson (son's son)
sonur	son
sókn	church parish
sóknarkirkja	parish church
sóknarmannatal	parish register
sóknarprestur	parish minister
Sra	Reverend
staður	place
steinhöggvari	mason
steinsmiður	stone mason
stjórari	manager
stjúp barn	stepchild
stjúpfaðir	stepfather
stjúpi	stepfather
stjúpmóðir	stepmother
stríð	war
stúlka	girl
stúlkur	girls
stýrimaður	pilot, mate, navigator
stöðuvatn	lake
suður	south
sukkersyge	diabetes
sumar	summer
sunnudagur	Sunday
sútari	tanner
sveinbarn	boy
sveinn	boy, apprentice
sveitamaður	farmer
sveitarlimur	pauper
svín	pig
synir	sons
systir	sister
systur	sisters
systkin	siblings
systkinabarn	first cousins
sýsla	county
sýslumaður	county sheriff
söðlari	saddler
söðlasmiður	harness maker
sögunarmilla	sawmill

T

taugaveiki	typhoid
telpa	young girl
tengdadóttir	daughter-in-law
tengdafaðir	father-in-law
tengdamóðir	mother-in-law
tengdasonur	son-in-law

Icelandic	English
til	to, at
tilfelli	accident, case
timburmaður	carpenter
timbursmiður	carpenter
tinsmiður	tinsmith
tími	hour, time
tíu	ten
tíundi	tenth
tólf	twelve
tólfti	twelfth
trésmiður	carpenter
trúlofast	get engaged
tugtmeistari	warden
tuttugasti	twentieth
tuttugasti og annar	twenty-second
tuttugasti og áttundi	twenty-eighth
tuttugasti og fimmti	twenty-fifth
tuttugasti og fjórði	twenty-fourth
tuttugasti og fyrsti	twenty-first
tuttugasti og níundi	twenty-ninth
tuttugasti og sjötti	twenty-sixth
tuttugasti og sjöundi	twenty-seventh
tuttugasti og þriðji	twenty-third
tuttugu	twenty
tuttugu og átta	twenty-eight
tuttugu og einn	twenty-one
tuttugu og fimm	twenty-five
tuttugu og fjórir	twenty-four
tuttugu og níu	twenty-nine
tuttugu og sex	twenty-six
tuttugu og sjö	twenty-seven
tuttugu og tveir	twenty-two
tuttugu og þrir	twenty-three
tún	field
tveir	two
tvíburar	twins
tærandi sýki	consumption
tökubarn	foster child

U

um	on, about
umboðsmaður	agent
ung	young
ungbarn	infant, young child
ungfrú	Miss
unglingur	youth, adolescent
ungur	young
uppdráttur	wasting sickness

Icelandic	English
Ú	
úr	of, from
útflytjandi	emigrant
V	
varðmaður	watchman
vatn	lake, water
vatnssýki	dropsy
vefari	weaver
vegur	road
veikleiki ellinnar	old age weakness
veitingamaður	landlord, innkeeper
verkamaður	workman, laborer
verkastúlka	woman worker
verkur	pain
vestur	west
vetur	winter
við	on, at, in
vika	week
vinnuhjú	workers, farmhands, servants
vinnukona	maidservant
vinnumaður	laborer, farmhand (male)
vitni	witness
vor	spring
vottorð	certificate
vottur	witness
Y	
yfirsetukona	midwife
yngismaður	young man
yngisstúlka	young woman, girl
yngri	younger
ytri	outer

P

þjófur	thief
þjóna	serve
þjónn	servant
þorp	village
þrettán	thirteen
þrettándi	thirteenth
þriðjudagur	Tuesday
þriðji	third
þrir	three
þrjátfu	thirty

Icelandic	English
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þrjátíu og einn	thirty-one
þrítugasti	thirtieth
þrítugasti og fyrsti	thirty-first
þúsund	thousand
þúsundasti	thousandth

Æ

æði	panic
æðislegur	in panic
ægtabarn	legitimate child
ægtaviigder	married, marriages
æsing	inflammation, agitation
ættfaðir	ancestor

Ö

öld	century
ölmusumaður	living from charity
önduð	deceased, dead (female)
öreiga	destitute

NUMBERS

In Icelandic genealogical records, numbers are occasionally spelled out. This is especially true of dates. The following list gives the cardinal (1, 2, 3) and the ordinal (1st, 2nd, 3rd) versions of each number. In actual usage, days of the month are written in ordinal form.

Cardinal		Ordinal	
1	einn	1st	fyrstur
2	tveir	2nd	annar
3	þrír	3rd	þriðji
4	fjórir	4th	fjórði
5	fimm	5th	fimmti
6	sex	6th	sjötti
7	sjö	7th	sjöundi
8	átta	8th	áttundi
9	nú	9th	níundi
10	tíu	10th	tíundi
11	ellefu	11th	ellefti
12	tólf	12th	tólfti
13	þrettán	13th	þrettándi
14	fjórtán	14th	fjórtándi
15	fimmtán	15th	fimmtándi
16	sexstán	16th	sexstándi

Cardinal	Ordinal
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17	sautján	17th	sautjándi
18	átján	18th	átjándi
19	níttján	19th	níttjándi
20	tuttugu	20th	tuttugasti
21	tuttugu	21st	tuttugasti
	og einn		og fyrsti
22	tuttugu	22nd	tuttugasti
	og tveir		og annar
23	tuttugu	23rd	tuttugasti
	og þrír		og þriðji
24	tuttugu	24th	tuttugasti
	og fjórir		og fjórði
25	tuttugu	25th	tuttugasti
	og fimm		og fimmti
26	tuttugu	26th	tuttugasti
	og sex		og sjötti
27	tuttugu	27th	tuttugasti
	og sjö		og sjöundi
28	tuttugu	28th	tuttugasti
	og átta		og áttundi
29	tuttugu	29th	tuttugasti
	og nú		og níundi
30	þrjátíu	30th	þrítugasti
31	þrjátíu	31st	þrítugasti
	og einn		og fyrsti
40	fjörutíu	40th	fertugasti
50	fimmtíu	50th	fimmtugasti
60	sextíu	60th	sextugasti
70	sjötíu	70th	sjötugasti
80	áttatíu	80th	áttugasti
90	níutíu	90th	nítugasti
100	hundrað	100th	hundraðasti
1000	þúsund	1000th	þúsundasti

DATES AND TIME

Use the terms in this section and the "Numbers" section to interpret dates.

Months of the Year

Icelandic	English
janúar	January
febrúar	February
marz, mars	March
apríl	April
maí	May
júní	June
júlí	July
ágúst	August

Icelandic**English**

september, 7ber
 október, 8ber
 nóvember, 9ber
 desember, 10ber

September
 October
 November
 December

Days of the Week**Icelandic****English**

sunnudagur
 mánudagur
 þriðjudagur
 miðvikudagur
 fimmtudagur
 föstudagur
 laugardagur

Sunday
 Monday
 Tuesday
 Wednesday
 Thursday
 Friday
 Saturday

Seasons of the Year**Icelandic****English**

haust
 vor
 sumar
 vetur

autumn, fall
 spring
 summer
 winter

Times of the Day**Icelandic****English**

nón, síðdeg
 hádeg

midafternoon, afternoon
 noon, midday

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